

Whereas, Iran has announced its twenty-one member delegation, which includes eleven wrestlers that will compete at the 1998 World Cup of Freestyle Wrestling on the Campus of Oklahoma State University in Stillwater on April 4-5, 1998; and,

Whereas, this annual freestyle dual meet championships is behind only the World Championships and Olympics in importance; and,

Whereas, the Iranian lineup includes Gholam Reza Mohammadi, Bahman Tayebi-Kermani, Ali Reza Dabier, Abbas Haji Kenari, Massoud Jamshidi, Majied Khodaei, P. Dorostkar, Ali Reza Heydari, Davoud Ghanbari, Abbas Jadidi, and Ali Reza Rezaie; and,

Whereas, the tournament marks Iran's first competition in the United States since the 1996 Olympic Games; and,

Whereas, in February, the United States participated in the Takhti Cup wrestling tournament in Iran, the first U.S. team of any sport to compete in Iran in almost twenty years; and,

Whereas, I join the citizens of Southeastern Ohio, with distinct please, in honoring the Iranian wrestling team for their participation in the 1998 World Cup of Freestyle Wrestling in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

#### REPEALING THE MARRIAGE PENALTY

#### HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 1, 1998*

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, the reason I'm cosponsoring the Marriage Tax Elimination Act in Congress is because I believe marriage is an institution that should no longer be discouraged by federal tax laws.

At a time when various government chief executives, in Colorado and in Washington are exhibiting confusion about the importance of marriage and the meaning of fidelity, few people are aware that there are several of us in Congress actually making progress toward strengthening families and honoring the integrity of these sacred unions.

The current tax law punishes married couples who file income taxes jointly by pushing them into higher tax brackets. The marriage penalty taxes combined income at higher rates than if each salary were taxed individually.

For example, an individual with an income of \$24,000 would be taxed at 15 percent. But a working couple, each with an income of \$24,000 or a combined income of \$48,000, would be taxed at 28 percent on a portion of that income. They would pay \$600 more in taxes simply because they are married.

The Congressional Budget Office estimated over 21 million couples are affected by the marriage penalty, averaging \$1,400 in additional taxes. Indeed, I've heard from many of them, and I'm quite sympathetic since, for twelve years, I have been a victim of the penalty myself.

Rarely does the marriage penalty subject fail to come up as I listen to taxpayers. Every week I conduct a public town meeting here in Fort Collins, and I hold several more throughout the Fourth Congressional District. Last month during a local hearing held specifically to discuss education issues, a state Board of Education member cited the marriage penalty

as an example of anti-family policy that ultimately hurts schools and children.

More recently, I conducted an additional series of live electronic town-hall radio call-in programs. Callers demanded the marriage penalty be lifted. Also, my Web page has been inundated with support for the marriage tax repeal.

The marriage tax penalty is not new, nor are efforts to repeal it. But previous efforts ran into stiff opposition in Congress from those who believe the government needs the money more than the families who earn it.

Fortunately, with the current Congress, those placing the priorities of government above the needs of families have finally been outnumbered by those of us who are serious about tax reform, tax relief, and more robust family budgets.

Since Republicans earned the majority at the Capitol, We've delivered more tax relief to the middle class and working poor than any Congress of the last half-century. And in Colorado, the Republican state legislature has produced even more prosperity for us all.

In December, the Coloradoan reported a study by the Center on Budget Priorities revealing the average income of Colorado's poorest families increased faster than all other income categories over the last decade Colorado's low state tax rates, frugal spending habits, and favorable economic policies have provided that needed hand-up to those of formerly meager means.

On top of the pro-family tax relief bills passed last year, we're moving ahead in Congress on a second package of tax proposals, the cornerstone of which is marriage penalty elimination.

As a general goal, I believe the total tax bite for American families should be no more than 25 percent of income. Of course, the current burden is much higher than that and we have a long way to go.

But, while we tackle the more sweeping objectives of IRS reform and overhauling the tax code, Congress ought to move swiftly and reaffirm its commitment to American families by repealing the marriage tax penalty.

#### THE 105TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF DOVER, MORRIS COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

#### HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 1, 1998*

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 105th Anniversary of the First Baptist Church of Dover in Morris County, New Jersey.

The First Baptist Church has been serving the Dover community since 1893, when thirty-nine Dover residents, all members of the neighboring Netcong Baptist Church, came together to establish a church in their own town. While on the date of its establishment the church had no building of its own, by 1895 the cornerstone of a new building was set and, one year later, a dedication service for the church was held.

As the church continued to attract new parishioners over subsequent years, it soon became clear that there would not be enough space to house the entire parish. By 1966, the First Baptist Church purchased 12 acres of land on which to build a newer, larger building

for worship. Construction of this building was completed on Easter Sunday, 1975, and recent renovation of the church's interior has included a complete overhaul of the church's main auditorium.

Continuing its long tradition of social outreach, the First Baptist Church today supports close to sixty-seven missionaries, who extend the good works of the church throughout New Jersey and in countries overseas. The church has also been blessed with strong leadership over the years, and has seen thirteen pastors since its inception in 1893. It is led today by Reverend John L. Hackworth, Senior Pastor.

On Sunday, April 5, 1998, Reverend Hackworth, with the assistance of the church's parish and clergy, will lay the foundation for continued success into the next century. On this momentous occasion, I want to ask you, Mr. Speaker, and my colleagues to join with me in commemorating the First Baptist Church of Dover on this special anniversary year.

#### THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT IS NOT "WAR ON THE WEST, PART TWO"

#### HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 1, 1998*

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, recently, some of my colleagues on the Resources Committee have been trying to convince the public that the Administration is placing an unfair burden on western property owners by deliberately implementing the Endangered Species Act more harshly in the western U.S. The facts simply do not support the allegations. While no one can argue that California has far more endangered and threatened species than most states (Hawaii has the most), my colleagues have confused the simple logic of cause and effect.

The western and southern states are the most biologically diverse and unique regions in the nation. In California alone, we have an extraordinary range of coastal and upland forests, deserts, grasslands, and shrublands—all with large numbers of rare and endemic species which are vulnerable to the effects of our economic prosperity. While my colleagues would argue that environmental protection laws like the Endangered Species Act inhibit economic growth, the facts lead to a very different conclusion. In 1996, the average number of housing starts per month were 661,000 in the southern states. In the western states, they averaged 361,000 a month, while there were only 132,000 a month in the Northeast. Florida's growth rate is legendary; Texas is growing at a rate of about 6 million new people per decade; and California is expected to have 18 million more people by the year 2025. The reality is that the West, and California in particular, are at the forefront of the ongoing battle between development and open space.

What is really needed in the West is a means of addressing the loss of family farmland and open space while we address the needs of endangered species and their habitats. Any rewrite of the Endangered Species Act must contain incentives for small, private